

# INTERSTATE 15 *FasTrak*<sup>TM</sup>

- Need \$10 million to implement value pricing on future I-15 Managed Lanes

## *When You Need the Time*

**The Project:** The Interstate 15 FasTrak<sup>TM</sup> Program allows solo drivers to pay a per trip fee to use the existing high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes located in the center median along eight miles of I-15 between Kearny Mesa and Rancho Penasquitos in the City of San Diego. Carpoolers, Vanpoolers, and transit riders use these HOV lanes for free.

FasTrak is a model for using existing transportation infrastructure more efficiently. Representatives from the California Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Transit Development Board, the California Highway Patrol, state legislators, and SANDAG work together on this innovative commute solution. The program provides a faster commute for solo drivers, and funds express bus service along I-15.

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## ***I-15 FasTrak goals:***

- Use the excess capacity on the HOV Lanes
- Improve transit and rideshare services along I-15, and provide travel choices for I-15 commuters
- Test whether value pricing can relieve traffic congestion

**The Need:** Interstate 15 is a heavily used highway in the San Diego region connecting several north inland communities with major employment centers to the south. Prior to 1996, there was excess capacity on the I-15 HOV lanes and rush hour congestion on the regular freeway lanes. There also was limited transit service in the corridor.

**Project Costs:** The program currently is fully funded by the fees collected (approximately \$2 million per year). The program is so successful that it is generating enough revenue to fund continued FasTrak operating costs as well as increased transit service in the I-15 corridor.

**Project Status:** California Senate Bill 313, signed in September 2001 by the Governor, eliminated the sunset date for the program. This law allows SANDAG to continue value pricing on I-15 indefinitely, subject to federal approval.

- The number of daily carpools on the HOV lanes has increased from 7,700 to 17,600 (129 percent increase).
- Average daily traffic on the carpool lanes has increased from 9,400 to 22,700 vehicles per day (143 percent increase).
- The violation rate has dropped from 15 percent to less than five percent. A portion of toll revenues is used to fund enforcement by the California Highway Patrol.
- A portion of the fees collected is used to fund the Inland Breeze bus service (Routes 980/990). The Route 980 operates express service between Rancho Bernardo and downtown San Diego in the peak direction. The Route 990 operates in the reverse commute direction from downtown San Diego to Rancho Bernardo with intermediate stops in Hillcrest, Fashion Valley, Kearny Mesa, Mira Mesa, and Carmel Mountain Ranch.
- I-15 commuters tell us the project is a success and cite benefits such as reduced travel time, reliability of on-time arrival, and improved safety.

**Summary:** The I-15 FasTrak program has maximized the use of the excess capacity on the HOV lanes. Demand for the program continues to grow. Overall usage of the HOV lanes has more than doubled since 1996. There are now 24,700 I-15 FasTrak customers.